

1 McGREGOR W. SCOTT  
United States Attorney  
2 JUSTIN J. GILIO  
MICHAEL G. TIERNEY  
3 Assistant United States Attorney  
2500 Tulare Street, Suite 4401  
4 Fresno, CA 93721  
Telephone: (559) 497-4000  
5 Facsimile: (559) 497-4099

6 Attorneys for Plaintiff  
7 United States of America

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,**

**Plaintiff,**

V.

DILLON THOMAS JOHNSON,

Defendant.

CASE NO. 1:20-MJ-00075 SKO

**STIPULATION REGARDING EXCLUDABLE  
TIME PERIODS UNDER SPEEDY TRIAL ACT;  
FINDINGS AND ORDER**

DATE: August 6, 2020

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

COURT: Hon. Sheila K. Oberto

This case is set for a preliminary hearing on August 6, 2020. This Court has issued a series of General Orders to address public health concerns related to COVID-19 and to suspend jury trials in the Eastern District of California.

Although the General Orders address the district-wide health concern, the Supreme Court has emphasized that the Speedy Trial Act's end-of-justice provision "counteract[s] substantive openendedness with procedural strictness," "demand[ing] on-the-record findings" in a particular case. *Zedner v. United States*, 547 U.S. 489, 509 (2006). "[W]ithout on-the-record findings, there can be no exclusion under" § 3161(h)(7)(A). *Id.* at 507. Moreover, any such failure cannot be harmless. *Id.* at 509; see also *United States v. Ramirez-Cortez*, 213 F.3d 1149, 1153 (9th Cir. 2000) (explaining that a judge ordering an ends-of-justice continuance must set forth explicit findings on the record "either orally or in writing").

Based on the plain text of the Speedy Trial Act—which Zedner emphasizes as both mandatory

1 and inexcusable—General Orders 611, 612, and 617 require specific supplementation. Ends-of-justice  
2 continuances are excludable only if “the judge granted such continuance on the basis of his findings that  
3 the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the  
4 defendant in a speedy trial.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). Moreover, no such period is excludable unless  
5 “the court sets forth, in the record of the case, either orally or in writing, its reason or finding that the  
6 ends of justice served by the granting of such continuance outweigh the best interests of the public and  
7 the defendant in a speedy trial.” *Id.*

8 The General Orders exclude delay in the “ends of justice.” 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code  
9 T4). Although the Speedy Trial Act does not directly address continuances stemming from pandemics,  
10 natural disasters, or other emergencies, this Court has discretion to order a continuance in such  
11 circumstances. For example, the Ninth Circuit affirmed a two-week ends-of-justice continuance  
12 following Mt. St. Helens’ eruption. *Furlow v. United States*, 644 F.2d 764 (9th Cir. 1981). The court  
13 recognized that the eruption made it impossible for the trial to proceed. *Id.* at 767-68; *see also United*  
14 *States v. Correa*, 182 F. Supp. 326, 329 (S.D.N.Y. 2001) (citing *Furlow* to exclude time following the  
15 September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the resultant public emergency). The coronavirus is posing a  
16 similar, albeit more enduring, barrier to the prompt proceedings mandated by the statutory rules.

17 In light of the societal context created by the foregoing, this Court should consider the following  
18 case-specific facts in finding excludable delay appropriate in this particular case under the ends-of-  
19 justice exception, § 3161(h)(7) (Local Code T4). If continued, this Court should designate a new date  
20 for the preliminary hearing. *United States v. Lewis*, 611 F.3d 1172, 1176 (9th Cir. 2010) (noting any  
21 pretrial continuance must be “specifically limited in time”).

## 22 STIPULATION

23 Plaintiff United States of America, by and through its counsel of record, and defendant, by and  
24 through defendant’s counsel of record, hereby stipulate as follows:

- 25 1. By previous order, this matter was set for preliminary hearing on August 6, 2020.  
26 2. By this stipulation, defendant now moves to continue the preliminary hearing until  
27 **October 15, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.** and to exclude speedy trial and indictment time between August 6,  
28 2020, and October 15, 2020, under Local Code T4.

1       3.     The parties agree and stipulate, and request that the Court find the following:

2           a)     The government has represented that initial discovery associated with this case  
3 includes investigative reports, social media account records, interview recordings, photographs  
4 and other media evidence. All this discovery has been either produced directly to counsel and/or  
5 made available for inspection and copying.

6           b)     Counsel for defendant desires additional time to review the discovery, consult  
7 with this client, conduct further investigation, and discuss a possible resolution of the case with  
8 the government.

9           c)     Counsel for defendant believes that failure to grant the above-requested  
10 continuance would deny him the reasonable time necessary for effective preparation, taking into  
11 account the exercise of due diligence.

12          d)     The government does not object to the continuance.

13          e)     In addition to the public health concerns cited by General Order 617 and  
14 presented by the evolving COVID-19 pandemic, an ends-of-justice delay is particularly apt in  
15 this case because counsel and other relevant individuals have been encouraged to telework and  
16 minimize personal contact to the greatest extent possible. It will be difficult to avoid personal  
17 contact should the preliminary hearing proceed.

18          f)     Based on the above-stated findings, the ends of justice served by continuing the  
19 case as requested outweigh the interest of the public and the defendant in an indictment or trial  
20 within the original dates prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

21          g)     For the purpose of computing time under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161,  
22 et seq., within which an indictment must be filed and within which a trial must commence, the  
23 time period of August 6, 2020 to October 15, 2020, inclusive, is deemed excludable pursuant to  
24 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), B(iv) [Local Code T4] because it results from a continuance granted  
25 by the Court at defendant's request on the basis of the Court's finding that the ends of justice  
26 served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a  
27 speedy indictment/trial.

28        4.     Nothing in this stipulation and order shall preclude a finding that other provisions of the

1 Speedy Trial Act dictate that additional time periods are excludable from the period within which an  
2 indictment must be filed and a trial must commence.

3 IT IS SO STIPULATED.  
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5

Dated: July 28, 2020

McGREGOR W. SCOTT  
United States Attorney

7 /s/ JUSTIN J. GILIO  
8 JUSTIN J. GILIO  
9 Assistant United States Attorney

10 Dated: July 28, 2020

11 /s/ MARK COLEMAN  
12 MARK COLEMAN  
13 Counsel for Defendant  
14 Dillon Thomas Johnson

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## ORDER

For the reasons set forth in the parties' stipulation and representations contained therein, the Court finds that the ends of justice served by continuing the case as requested outweigh the interest of the public and the defendant in an indictment or trial within the original dates prescribed by the Speedy Trial Act.

For the purpose of computing time under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161, et seq., within which an indictment must be filed and within which a trial must commence, the time period of August 6, 2020 to October 15, 2020, inclusive, is deemed excludable pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A), B(iv) [Local Code T4] because it results from a continuance granted by the Court at defendant's request on the basis of the Court's finding that the ends of justice served by taking such action outweigh the best interest of the public and the defendant in a speedy indictment/trial.<sup>1</sup>

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: July 29, 2020

/S/ Eric P. Gruj

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**UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

1. Nothing in this stipulation and order shall preclude a finding that other provisions of the Speedy Trial Act dictate that additional time periods are excludable from the period within which an indictment must be filed and a trial must commence.